

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A common E/F draft sill assembly for connecting one railroad car to another that is capable of receiving Type E or Type F draft gears and couplers, comprising:

a draft sill main body including two side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall, a front end face and a rear end face;

a coupler opening on the front end face sized to accept both Type E and Type F draft gears and couplers;

flange holes provided in the bottom wall in a pattern that accepts both Type E and Type F draft carrier bolt configurations;

an integral spring basket assembly extending downward from the coupler opening on the front end face that is sized and shaped to receive a Type F spring-biased support assembly;

a keyslot provided on each of the two main body side walls near the front end face that is capable of receiving a cross-key connection of a Type E draft gear and coupler;

a mounting structure that accepts a standard vertical pin connection of a Type F draft gear and coupler; and

a drop-in removable Type E coupler support that is removably fittable within the integral spring basket and serves as a fixed lower carrier surface for rigidly supporting a Type E draft gear and coupler.

2. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the drop-in removable Type E coupler support has shoulders that abut corresponding support surfaces of the integral spring basket support assembly to rigidly support the coupler support at a predetermined vertical position.

3. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 2, wherein the carrier surface of the drop-in removable Type E coupler support has a top wear plate affixed thereto.

4. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the carrier surface of the drop-in removable Type E coupler support has a top wear plate affixed thereto.

5. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the drop-in Type E coupler support is loosely fitted in the integral spring basket assembly.

6. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the side walls are each provided with at least one of body bolster pads and body bolster wings to provide mounting surfaces for attachment of a railroad car body bolster.

7. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 6, wherein the side walls are provided with both body bolster pads and body bolster wings.

8. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 7, wherein the body bolster pads and body bolster wings are alternatively provided on the side walls.

9. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the main body is cast and the top wall includes a precisely machined attachment surface near the coupler opening that extends across an enlarged surface area that encompasses at least two discrete attachment areas for mounting of the draft sill to two different types of railroad car bodies.

10. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 9, wherein substantially the entire top wall is precisely machined.

11. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, wherein the main body is a standardized draft sill having a total length from the front face to the rear face sized to accommodate multiple railroad car configurations.

12. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 11, wherein the rear end face of the main body is sized and shaped to fit a center sill of a first railroad car configuration.

13. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 12, further comprising a weld-in plug mountable on the rear end face of the standardized main body, the weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a second railroad car configuration different from the first railroad car configuration.

14. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 11, further comprising at least two different weld-in plugs mountable on the rear end face of the standardized main body, each different weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a different railroad car configuration.

15. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 11, further comprising a weld-in plug mounted on the rear end face of the standardized main body, the weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a specific railroad car configuration.

16. The common E/F draft sill assembly of claim 1, further comprising a Type F spring-biased support assembly within the integral spring basket assembly.

17. A common E/F draft sill assembly for connecting one railroad car to another that is capable of receiving Type E or Type F draft gears and couplers, comprising:

a draft sill main body including two side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall, a front end face and a rear end face;

a coupler opening on the front end face sized to accept both Type E and Type F draft gears and couplers;

flange holes provided in the bottom wall in a pattern that accepts both Type E and Type F draft carrier bolt configurations;

an integral spring basket assembly extending downward from the coupler opening on the front end face that is sized and shaped to receive a Type F spring-biased support assembly;

a keyslot provided on each of the two main body side walls near the front end face that is capable of receiving a cross-key connection of a Type E draft gear and coupler;

a mounting structure that accepts a standard vertical pin connection of a Type F draft gear and coupler;

a drop-in removable Type E coupler support that is removably fittable within the integral spring basket and serves as a fixed lower carrier surface for rigidly supporting a Type E draft gear and coupler;

body bolster pads and body bolster wings provided on the side walls;

the main body is a standardized cast draft sill having a total length from the front face to the rear face sized to accommodate multiple railroad car configurations and the top wall includes a precisely machined attachment surface near the coupler opening that extends across an enlarged surface area that encompasses at least two discrete attachment areas for mounting of the draft sill to two different types of railroad car bodies; and

a weld-in plug mounted on the rear end face of the standardized main body, the weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a specific railroad car configuration.

18. A common E/F draft sill assembly for connecting one railroad car to another that is capable of receiving Type E or Type F draft gears and couplers, comprising:

a draft sill main body including two side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall, a front end face and a rear end face;

a coupler opening on the front end face sized to accept both Type E and Type F draft gears and couplers;

flange holes provided in the bottom wall in a pattern that accepts both Type E and Type F draft carrier bolt configurations;

an integral spring basket assembly extending downward from the coupler opening on the front end face that is sized and shaped to receive a Type F spring-biased support assembly;

a keyslot provided on each of the two main body side walls near the front end face that is capable of receiving a cross-key connection of a Type E draft gear and coupler;

a mounting structure that accepts a standard vertical pin connection of a Type F draft gear and coupler;

a drop-in removable Type E coupler support that is removably fittable within the integral spring basket and serves as a fixed lower carrier surface for rigidly supporting a Type E draft gear and coupler;

body bolster pads and body bolster wings provided on the side walls;

the main body is a standardized draft sill having a total length from the front face to the rear face sized to accommodate multiple railroad car configurations; and

a weld-in plug mounted on the rear end face of the standardized main body, the weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a specific railroad car configuration.

19. A common E/F draft sill assembly for connecting one railroad car to another that is capable of receiving Type E or Type F draft gears and couplers, comprising:

a draft sill main body including two side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall, a front end face and a rear end face;

a coupler opening on the front end face sized to accept both Type E and Type F draft gears and couplers;

flange holes provided in the bottom wall in a pattern that accepts both Type E and Type F draft carrier bolt configurations;

an integral spring basket assembly extending downward from the coupler opening on the front end face that is sized and shaped to receive a Type F spring-biased support assembly;

a keyslot provided on each of the two main body side walls near the front end face that is capable of receiving a cross-key connection of a Type E draft gear and coupler;

a mounting structure that accepts a standard vertical pin connection of a Type F draft gear and coupler;

a drop-in removable Type E coupler support that is removably fittable within the integral spring basket and serves as a fixed lower carrier surface for rigidly supporting a Type E draft gear and coupler;

body bolster pads and body bolster wings provided on the side walls; and

the main body is a standardized cast draft sill having a total length from the front face to the rear face sized to accommodate multiple railroad car configurations and the top wall includes a precisely machined attachment surface near the coupler opening that extends across an enlarged surface area that encompasses at least two discrete attachment areas for mounting of the draft sill to two different types of railroad car bodies,

wherein the rear end face of the main body is sized and shaped to fit a center sill of a first railroad car configuration and a weld-in plug mountable on the rear end face of the standardized main body has a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a second railroad car configuration different from the first railroad car configuration.

20. A common E/F draft sill assembly for connecting one railroad car to another that is capable of receiving Type E or Type F draft gears and couplers, comprising:

a draft sill main body including two side walls, a top wall, a bottom wall, a front end face and a rear end face;

a coupler opening on the front end face sized to accept both Type E and Type F draft gears and couplers;

flange holes provided in the bottom wall in a pattern that accepts both Type E and Type F draft carrier bolt configurations;

an integral spring basket assembly extending downward from the coupler opening on the front end face that is sized and shaped to receive a Type F spring-biased support assembly;

a keyslot provided on each of the two main body side walls near the front end face that is capable of receiving a cross-key connection of a Type E draft gear and coupler;

a mounting structure that accepts a standard vertical pin connection of a Type F draft gear and coupler; and

a drop-in removable Type E coupler support that is removably fittable within the integral spring basket and serves as a fixed lower carrier surface for rigidly supporting a Type E draft gear and coupler,

wherein the main body is a standardized draft sill having a total length from the front face to the rear face sized to accommodate multiple railroad car configurations and at least two different weld-in plugs are mountable on the rear end face of the standardized main body, each different weld-in plug having a length and rear face shape that adapts the standardized main body of the draft sill to a center sill of a different railroad car configuration.